

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Kindly amend claims 1, 6 and 21, cancel claims 17-20, and add new claims 22 and 23 as set forth below. In compliance with the Revised Amendment Format published in the Official Gazette on February 25, 2003, a complete listing of claims is provided herein. The changes in the amended claims are shown by strikethrough (for deleted matter) and underlining (for added matter).

1. **(Currently Amended)** An air cargo yield management method for optimising a yield parameter resulting from assigning ~~[[a]]~~ an offered capacity offered by a future instance of a cargo flight to each one of a plurality of different categories of requests competing for the capacity, ~~the capacity being defined by a plurality of capacity variables, the method including the steps of:~~

defining the offered capacity by a weight capacity variable and a volume capacity variable, the weight variable and the volume variable independent relative to each other;

storing a set of historical profiles for each one of a plurality of previous instances of the cargo flight, the set including a historical profile of an historical value of ~~each capacity variable of the plurality of capacity variables~~ the weight variable and the volume variable reserved by each category,

assigning a probability to each previous instance of the cargo flight,

estimating a potential profile of a potential value of ~~each of the plurality of capacity variables~~ the weight variable and the volume variable from each historical profile according to a corresponding current value of the capacity variable reserved by the category for the future instance of the cargo flight and according to a corresponding unconstrained demand of the ~~plurality of capacity variables~~ weight variable and the volume variable for the category in the previous instance of the cargo flight,

defining a historical scenario for each previous instance of the cargo flight, the historical scenario including a final potential capacity variable from each corresponding potential profile, the final potential variable comprising a final potential weight capacity variable and a final potential volume capacity variable;

determining an authorisation to allocate the offered capacity for each capacity variable the weight variable and the volume variable of each category in the future instance of the cargo flight by applying a stochastic model to the historical scenarios according to the corresponding probabilities; and

providing a determination to a display of a computing unit of an acceptance or a rejection of a request for the cargo flight based on the authorization.

2. ***(Previously Presented)*** The yield management method according to claim 1, wherein the step of assigning the probability includes:

determining a first coefficient depending on a difference between a temporal period associated with the previous instance of the cargo flight and a temporal period associated with the future instance of the cargo flight,

determining a second coefficient depending on a space between a current time and an occurrence time of the previous instance of the cargo flight,

calculating a weight by combining the first coefficient and the second coefficient, calculating the probability by normalising the weight.

3. ***(Original)*** The yield management method according to claim 2, wherein the step of calculating the weight consists of calculating a weighted sum of the first coefficient and the second coefficient.

4. ***(Original)*** The yield management method according to claim 1, wherein each historical profile and each potential profile include a plurality of corresponding snapshots of the reserved capacity variable and of the potential capacity variable, respectively, the step of estimating the potential profile including:

estimating an opening coefficient for each period comprised between two consecutive snapshots, the opening coefficient being indicative of a percentage of time during which the category was open in the period,

calculating an emphasis value for each period as a weighted mean of a gradient in the period of the reserved capacity variable for the category in a subset of the corresponding historical profiles,

estimating a potential gradient for each period as a linear interpolation between the gradient, for a first value of the opening coefficient indicative of a complete opening of the category, and the highest between the gradient and the emphasis value, for a second value of the opening coefficient indicative of a complete closure of the category, and

constructing the potential profile from a time corresponding to the current time by integrating the potential gradients starting from the corresponding current capacity variable.

5. **(Original)** The yield management method according to claim 4, wherein the step of estimating the potential profile further includes:

verifying whether at least one result of the integration in each snapshot for each category is not strictly positive, and

setting each potential capacity variable of the category in the snapshot to zero if the verification is affirmative.

6. **(Currently Amended)** The yield management method according to claim 4, wherein ~~the at least one capacity variable consists of a plurality of capacity variables,~~ the step of estimating the potential profile further including comprises reconciling the potential capacity variables for each category in the snapshot to a reference value of a logic relation therebetween.

7. **(Original)** The yield management method according to claim 6, wherein the step of reconciling includes:

verifying whether the logic relation between the potential capacity variables for the category in the snapshot is included between a first limit defined by the logic relation between the reserved capacity variables for the category in the snapshot and a second limit defined by the logic relation between the potential capacity variables for the category in a preceding snapshot, and

updating the potential capacity variables for the category in the snapshot for correcting the corresponding logic relation to the closest one of the first limit and the second limit.

8. ***(Previously Presented)*** The yield management method according to claim 1, further including the steps of:

determining a historical unit value of the yield parameter for each category in each previous instance of the cargo flight if available,

estimating the historical unit yield parameter for each category in the other previous instances of the cargo flight as a weighted mean of the corresponding historical unit yield parameters available,

estimating a potential unit value of the yield parameter for each category in each previous instance of the cargo flight from the corresponding historical unit yield parameter, and

calculating a potential value of the yield parameter for each category in each previous instance of the cargo flight multiplying the corresponding potential unit yield parameter by the corresponding potential capacity variable, the potential yield parameter being included in the corresponding historical scenario.

9. ***(Previously Presented)*** The yield management method according to claim 8, wherein the step of estimating each potential unit yield parameter includes:

determining a current unit value of the yield parameter for the corresponding category in the future instance of the cargo flight, and

calculating each potential unit yield parameter as a sum of the corresponding historical unit yield parameter and current unit yield parameter weighted according to a corrective factor.

10. ***(Previously Presented)*** The yield management method according to claim 9, wherein the step of calculating the potential unit yield parameter further includes:

determining a further first coefficient depending on a difference between the current time and a planned occurrence time of the future instance of the cargo flight,

determining a further second coefficient depending on an increment of the at least one potential capacity variable with respect to the at least one current capacity variable for the category,

calculating the corrective factor by combining the further first coefficient and the further second coefficient, and

calculating the potential yield parameter as a sum of the historical yield parameter and the current yield parameter weighted according to the corrective factor.

11. **(Original)** The yield management method according to claim 8, further including the steps of:

calculating a weighted mean value of the potential yield parameter for each capacity variable of each category,

determining a nesting order of the categories for each capacity variable according to the corresponding weighted mean potential yield parameters.

12. **(Original)** The yield management method according to claim 11, wherein the step of determining each nesting order includes:

providing an input nesting order of the categories for each capacity variable, and

updating each input nesting order by ranking the categories having at least one scenario with each component thereof that is strictly positive.

13. **(Original)** The yield management method according to claim 1, wherein the step of determining the authorisations includes:

providing an aggressiveness parameter indicative of an attitude to the risk,

defining a first portion of a target function, the first portion calculating the yield parameter by assigning the offered capacity with a nesting policy,

defining a second portion of the target function, the second portion calculating the yield parameter by assigning the offered capacity with an out of nesting policy,

defining the target function as a sum of the first portion and the second portion weighted according to the aggressiveness parameter, and

calculating the authorisations by optimising the target function.

14. **(Original)** The yield management method according to claim 13, wherein the step of defining the second portion includes defining an independent component of the second portion for each capacity variable.

15. **(Original)** The yield management method according to claim 1, further including the step of providing a user-defined scenario with a corresponding probability, the stochastic model being further applied to the user-defined scenario according to the corresponding probability.

16. **(Previously Presented)** The yield management method according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of capacity variables consist of a weight and a volume, and the yield parameter consists of a revenue.

17-20. **(Canceled)**

21. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim 1 wherein the determining the authorization comprises ~~determining employing a partial nesting policy with~~ two sets of independent authorizations relating to the plurality of capacity variables ~~utilizing a partial nesting policy weight variable and the volume variable.~~

22. **(New)** The method of claim 21 further comprising allocating the offered capacity by comparing the request simultaneously to the offered capacity for the weight variable and the volume variable.

23. **(New)** The method of claim 22 wherein the allocating comprises allocating the offered capacity relative to the categories by two sets of independent allocations, each of said allocations using a partial nesting policy.